



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

1112 SE Quince Street * PO Box 47890
Olympia, Washington 98504-7890
Tel: (360) 236-4501 * FAX: (360) 586-7424
TDD Relay Service: 1-800-833-6388

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Dockets Management Branch
HFA-305
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville MD 20852

Refer to 01P-0075 "The Switch of status of emergency contraceptives from Rx to over-the counter"

The Washington State Department of Health joins the list of voices in support of making Emergency Contraception Pills available to women over the counter.

Washington State has been proactive by increasing access to Emergency Contraception pills through innovative programs that worked across agencies and communities. Feedback from communities has been very positive.

Emergency Contraception has proven safe and effective. In addition, it has been shown that women can understand how to take the pills and use it appropriately - obtaining long-term contraceptive methods rather than using Emergency Contraception as their primary contraceptive.

The availability of Emergency Contraception is a vital tool in meeting the goals of Healthy People 2010 outlined in Chapter 9 - increasing the percentage of pregnancies that are intended. The availability of Emergency Contraception over the counter will reduce the barriers to obtaining the pills within the window of time that is most effective. This availability will in turn will help continue to reduce unintended pregnancies, abortions and teen pregnancies.

Removing the prescriptive requirement for Emergency Contraception to increase access to this valuable contraceptive choice for women is the right thing to do.

Sincerely,

Maxine Hayes, MD, MPH
State Health Officer

01P-0075

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